1: Dube E-5 (1951-52) 1955 AW17 Telugu AW17

and functions to agents who acted for him. Now he gets a certain percentage of the total revenue collected in the village in lieu of the rent-free land. Thus, theoretically, the Deshmukh is both Mali Patel and Police Patel; but in actual practice these duties are carried out by his agents. In his capacity as Mali Patel of the village the Deshmukh takes steps to ensure the speedy collection of land revenue after each harvest and remits it to the district treasury. The Patwari can seek his assistance in matters connected with the land records and revenue of the village. For this he gets annually 5% of the total land revenue collected in the village. As Police Patel the Deshmukh is entitled to receive another 5% of the revenue collected during the year. In this capacity he has to send regular reports to the police regarding the occurrence of any crime in the village, keep an eye on the 'bad characters' and watch the activities of suspicious strangers. He maintains records of births and deaths in the village. It is his duty to assist the police in all possible ways in their investigations regarding criminal offences in the village. The other officials, such as the sub-inspector of police, head constables, constables and schoolmasters, are not a permanent part of the local population, and as such they do not generally get mixed up in local politics and other affairs. The police officials enjoy both prestige and power and are, in general, greatly feared by the people.

The Patwari, in spite of the fact that he is a petty revenue and land records official, occupies a pivotal position in the village and plays a very significant part in local politics. Being in charge of the land records, he can manipulate things both to the advantage and disadvantage of landowners, who often consult him and ask his advice. Of Patwaris in general it is said, 'What will they not do for a consideration? Give them money and they will prove their own father a bastard.' The present Patwari of Shamirpet is, for one in his position, a man of more than average intelligence and is himself a careful and substantial cultivator who owns some 247 acres of land jointly with his brother. He receives no salary from the government, nor does he have any rent-free land, but a certain percentage of the total land revenue is fixed by the government as his remuneration for the work.

All villages in Hyderabad State, as do most of those of middle and peninsular India, have a number of village menials. Their functions in the internal organization of the village are of two

1: Dube E-5 (1951-52) 1955 AW17 Telugu AW17

624 465 kinds: routine duties in the everyday life of the village and special duties connected with the arrangements which have to be made for touring government officials arriving in the village. The division of work among these village menials follows in the main the traditional occupations of the different castes. Payment for their work is often nominal. Some of them are paid small monthly salaries; others are granted small fields free of land revenue; while still others supplement their earnings by collecting their 'dues' from the agriculturists of the village at the time of harvesting.

Of the fourteen *kamgars* or village menials, six persons holding four different categories of posts are paid a salary of Rs. 3 per month. The rest enjoy small fragments of rent-free land in return for their part-time government duties. The Kawalkar is responsible for keeping a watch on the village and for patrolling it at night. He must assist the police and the Police Patel in the prevention and detection of crime. He should immediately bring to the notice of the Police Patel any criminal act, epidemic and births and deaths that occur in the village. When required by officers he must carry government mail and revenue remittances. In general it is his duty to assist the touring government officials in their work. He is aided in these tasks by the Talari and the Majkuri. These two menials perform similar functions. The Talari must fetch water for touring officials. The Majkuri must report all relevant matters to the police and to the Deshmukh. The present Kawalkar belongs to the Reddi caste, and the Talari is a Muttarasi. Both the Majkuris are untouchable Malas. The work of carrying government correspondence and money remittances as well as that of patrolling the village falls to the lot of these two Majkuris. At present there are three Neerudis in the village, two of whom are Malas and one a Madiga. It is their duty to look after the tank bund, particularly to keep a watch on the flood-gates and report any damage or suspected foul play. They should also periodically check the water-level in the tank and keep the superior village officers informed. The three Neerudis hold together seven acres of rent-free wet land granted to them by the government. The present Begari belongs to the Mala caste; and besides holding this petty menial position, he is a grave-digger by profession. His main duty is to keep clean the village rest-house, which is used by occasional travellers and officials of low status. He is expected to light fires there during winter evenings, and generally sleeps there at

1: Dube E-5 (1951-52) 1955 AW17 Telugu AW17

night. Dogs, cats and donkeys dying in the village have to be disposed of by him, for the Madigas only deal with dead cattle and will have nothing to do with other carcases. The Yettis in Shamirpet are from the Sakali and the Madiga castes. The Sakali Yettis do most of the superior kinds of menial work, such as carrying the baggage of touring government officials who would not allow their luggage to be carried by the untouchable Madigas; while the Madiga Yettis have to do all sorts of odd jobs of an inferior nature. They may be required to patrol the village, to keep watch on government buildings and to sweep and clean the village occasionally. They are also required to bring fuel for the use of touring government officials. The Yettis are not paid any salary for their work, and the nominal payments made to them by touring officials bear no proportion to the work done by them. The rest of the village menials are occupational caste groups, also performing some semi-government duties. The Wadla, for example, must repair the flood-gates of the tank, attend to the repairs of furniture and other woodwork in government offices, repair the central flag post in the village and supply free of charge or on nominal payment the pegs required for fixing the tents of touring government officials. When required the Kammari do iron work for the government officials. The Kummari has to supply earthen pots for use on public occasions or for the use of touring government officials. The Sakali cleans the kitchen utensils and plates of touring government officials, washes their clothes and carries their baggage to the next camp. The Mangali lights the lamps in the village rest-house, shaves touring officials and massages their bodies if they require this service. The Ausula has the duty of examining, when required to do so, coins which are believed to be counterfeit. He has also to help the police in weighing stolen ornaments and in making estimates of their approximate market price. Finally, the Dappu and the Kommu, who are both Madigas, play their drums and pipes respectively on public occasions. They make all public announcements by the beat of drum and are, like the Yetti, often required to do other menial work as well.

3. INTER-CASTE AND INTER-VILLAGE ORGANIZATION

The village is a territorial unit, the smallest but most significant among territorial groups in the social organization of the village

623 threshing floors, totes, and other [illegible] and [illegible] the villagers in common, (d) the extension of village sites and regulation of building, (f) the registration of births and deaths, (g) the control of pounds, (h) village protection, (i) improvement of agricultural stock and agriculture, (j) the promotion and encouragement of cottage industries, (k) the opening and maintenance of elementary schools, (l) the establishment and maintenance of Panchayat dispensaries, (m) gratuities to its officers and servants, (n) contribution to Joint Committee under Section 30 for any purpose in which the Panchayat is jointly interested and all other measures of public utility calculated to promote the safety, health, comfort or convenience of the inhabitants of the village, which are not included in any of the clauses relating to the District Board (vide Schedule 5 of the M. L. B. Act, 1930).

[652] **D. Supervision and Control :** The Panchayats were to submit copies of their budgets to the District Board, to the Collector and to the Inspector of Local Boards at Madras. The District Board and the District Panchayat Officer were expected to scrutinise the several items of income and expenditure.

The District and Assistant Panchayat Officers were to supervise the working and report on their progress to the Inspector of Local Boards. The reports of the minutes of the meetings would be recorded and reported to the District Board. Whenever a Panchayat was not working properly, and continued to be in an unsatisfactory condition for long, Section 45-A provided for the supersession of that body for an year and sometimes to another six months, when the administration would be entrusted to a special officer.

642 623 [622] [624] [651] In 1941, the advisory regime in Madras wanted to introduce some reform in the matter of Panchayats and as such prepared a bill with the following provisions — 1. introduction of ex-officio membership of the village headman, who was also to be eligible for Presidentship, 2. creation of whole-time executive officers for major Panchayats and the appointment of Village Karanams as Honorary Executive Officers of minor Panchayats, 3. supervision and control of Panchayats by the District Collector, the Revenue Board being the co-ordinating body over the Collector, 4. compulsory levy of a house tax and an additional levy of 3 pies of land cess, and 5. provision for the appointment of a nominated Panchayat. A Committee was appointed to examine this bill. This advisory Committee reported that 1. the District Collector should be entirely divorced from Panchayat administration, 2. the Board of Revenue need have nothing to do with the Panchayats, and instead the post of a Registrar-General should

be created, 3. Panchayats should be created compulsorily in all villages in 5 years, 4. Village Officers should be precluded from Panchayats, though the headman might function as a temporary President for short periods in the absence of the President, 5. adult franchise for all men and women of 21 years of age and the system of ward division and voting by ballot should be introduced in all Panchayats, 6. only Panchayats with a normal income of Rs. 5000 and more should have whole-time paid executive officers, 7. the levy of house tax and vehicle tax should be made compulsory, but the proposed additional land cess of 3 pies should be optional, and 8. there should be no nominated Panchayats.

The only effect of this bill was an amendment that was introduced to the Madras Local Boards Act of 1920, by Act XIX of 1943, by which, whole-time executive officers had been appointed to all major Panchayats, and such of the minor Boards as had been notified by Government in this behalf. In April 1946, the Madras Village Panchayats Act of 1946 was published along the lines of the bill of 1941, with some modifications.

The power of Collector in the matter of supervision and control of Panchayats in the District was retained, though he was to function, subject to the control of the Registrar-General, who was to be the provincial supervising authority in the place of the Board of Revenue, originally provided in the Bill of 1941. The ex-officio membership of the Village Headman and his eligibility to exercise the presidential functions in the absence of the President or Vice-President through the Karanam as Honorary executive authority of the minor Panchayats, assigned in the Bill of 1941 was dropped out. The clauses for the Amendment Act of 1943 providing for the appointment of whole-time executive officers for notified Panchayats, had been incorporated in the new Act also. The provision made in the Bill of 1941 for nomination of members had been retained, though it was to be resorted to only in special circumstances, such as fraction or disorder in the village.

But this Act was kept in abeyance while the Congress Ministry were thinking of introducing a thoroughly new Act.

At the time of the survey in 1947, the Panchayats were being governed by the Madras Local Boards Act of 1930. There had been no elections since 1939. Only the old Panchayats were continuing in power.

26 Rao. E-5 (1946-7) 1954 AWI India
Telugu AW17

Literacy: Literacy test to the members of the Panchayats was never seriously taken by the Madras Government. Only the Vice-president and the President were found to be invariably literate except in a few instances, and even there, local importance and weight of authority served as the best springs of administrative efficiency rather than the test of literacy. 212 623

The Election of the Panchayat President: This sometimes led to village disturbances and party factions, but, the remedy did not appear to get him elected by the villagers as a whole, instead of by the Panchayat. 666 578

Village Officials: The idea of associating the village officers: the Karanams and the Munsif, as the ex-officio members of the Panchayat attracted the attention of the framers of the Madras Panchayat Bill of 1941, "in order that their experience and influence may be at the disposal of the Panchayat," but, this was strongly opposed by the reformers of the Local Self Government who felt that these village officers were no longer the natural leaders, but salaried officials of the Government and hence unfit to participate in matters of village administration entrusted to a purely honorary body. Another reason that was often adduced against them was that both of them might generally be leaders of two opposing parties and their entrance into the Panchayat would simply wreck its working. 624

Executive of the Panchayat: Under the amendment of the Madras Local Boards Act in 1943, the Government of Madras appointed executive officers to Panchayats. The executive authority had 1. to carry into effect all the resolutions of the Board, 2. to perform all the duties and to exercise all the powers specifically imposed or conferred on the executive authority by the Act; in fact, whenever it was expressly so provided for the sanction of the Board and subject to all other restrictions, limitations and conditions hereinafter imposed, 3. to exercise the executive power, for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of the Act and 4. to be directly responsible for the due fulfilment of the Act. (Sec. 24-B of the amendment to the Madras Local Boards Act 1943 (a). He was to carry out all the resolutions passed by the Panchayat but this obligation was limited to legal 642 647

The executive officer was the custodian of all Government [illegible] had free access to them. All the [illegible] to the District Board, or the Provincial Government through the President. While

income of Rs. 20,000 to Rs. 30,000 per annum, the 2nd grade with an income from Rs. 10,000 to Rs. 20,000 and 3rd grade with an income of upto Rs. 10,000. Panchayats with Rs. 5,000 income were classified as minor Panchayats. The first 3 were called the major Panchayats and they had executive officer, while minor Panchayats had no executive officers. 623 652

Grades of the Executive Officers: The grade of the executive officer in the 1st grade Panchayats was from Rs. 80 to Rs. 100, of 2nd grade Panchayats from Rs. 60 to Rs. 80 and of 3rd grade Panchayats from Rs. 40 to Rs. 60. They were the servants of the Provincial Government working under the Local Boards. The Panchayats could not have any control over their executives. The executive officer was the chief executive of the Panchayat. He was to guide the Board in constitutional matters, put the resolutions before it for discussion and execute them according to its decision. He attended the meetings of the Panchayat, but was not allowed to vote. He was liable for transfer to any place in the Province. This meant a great hardship as the salary paid to him was too meagre to enable him to live in far off places from his native town. His pay, travelling allowance, dearness allowance and contributions to provident fund were all met by the Panchayat and the State Government paid nothing towards his maintenance. 647 [465] 623

Executive Officer and the Staff: The executive officer had under him a number of people like the sanitary inspector, the mistries, the supervisor for public works, vaccinators, compounders, midwives, bill collectors, not to speak of the clerical staff and menial staff like the scavengers, sweepers, lighters, peons, watchmen, etc. He was the appointing authority for staff beneath the clerical grade. The posts of the sanitary inspectors and overseers were advertised by him. They were to be appointed and paid by Panchayat with the approval and sanction of the District Health Officer and the District Engineer. But administratively they were subordinate to the executive officer and had to carry out the duties allotted to them by him. The sanitary inspector would have to look to matters of village sanitation, vaccination, administration of D. N. O. Licenses slaughter houses, clearance of sewage water, cleansing of gutters, cleansing of private and public latrines, etc. Similarly the overseer had to look to the execution of the public works all subject to the general supervision of the executive officer. 624 647

Executive Officers and Panchayat Boards: As a fact, the executive officers and the Panchayat Boards had a very strange relation. The executive officers were a much hated and an unhappy lot in the 647 623 578

by the Panchayat Board. This was intended to prevent nepotism and party politics in the matter of official appointments. But this change in the method of appointment alone would not attract better staff unless the existing poor salary scales of the Panchayat staff are revised for the better. 642 647

The Panchayat staff should also not be allowed to be stationary, but with a view to gaining experience, they should be transferred at least from one Panchayat to another in the same district, while the executive officer, supervisor, sanitary inspector, mistry could be made to move throughout the division which was equivalent to ¼th area of Province as the present scales of pay do not allow them to move with comfort to longer distances. The creation of a Local Board Civil Service and recruitment of staff through the Public Service Commission by examination may prove better than leaving the appointments to the discretion of the executive officer because even he could be accused of partiality as the village Panchayats are always full of party politics. Panchayats expect the executive officer to join one side or the other and if he does not do that make life impossible for him. His statutory position is such that he cannot steer clear of all such obligations and still be independent. While the Panchayats want them to be at their mercy, to appoint them and to dismiss them as they like; the executive officers prefer the total absence of any Panchayat control over them. They want to remain State servants, appointed, punished and dismissed only by the State. There was overwhelming evidence to support such a claim. There were instances where the executive officers had to run away when they were dastardly attacked by the Panchayat members because their vested interests were touched. Another executive officer was threatened with death by a Panchayat member who raided his house at midnight, because of the higher rates he charged to his favourite hotel keeper. The executive officer in another Panchayat had to literally run away from the Panchayat Board to the Railway Station to save his life from the dangerous fury of the Panchayat members for having converted the house tax valuation from capital to rental basis. Another Panchayat sent wires to the Inspector of Local Boards and the Local Government Minister stating that the Executive Officer had absconded with funds and a deadlock was created in the working of the Panchayat, when he was only in town and went there to see the District Collector. 623 [624] 578 647

None of the Panchayats either major or minor were able to undertake all the obligatory and optional functions. 623

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
Telugu 1.1

Education.—A day school has recently been started with 40 on the roll, 25 average attendance. Most of the pupils come from other villages. Three adults are able to read the vernacular. Eight can write their signatures. The karnam alone can read and write well. About five or six have learned to read and write but have lost the ability latterly. No one knows English.

There are about 50 or 60 books, all in Telugu. Of these about seven or eight relate to the Hindu Law and to village administration. The rest relate to the Puranas.

Village administration.—There is no panchayat.

There is a monigar and a karnam and two talaiyaris. The karnam keeps the accounts of the village, and the monigar is the village magistrate and collects the kist. The talaiyaris are the servants attached to the village. There is no sanitary administration.

The nearest Police station is situated at a distance of 12 miles in Sodam, which station was formerly at Kandur.

In recent years there has been practically no crime. About five years ago there was a murder, never detected.

For the present there is only one case belonging to this village pending judgment at the Sessions Court, Chittoor. This is about a land dispute.

Ordinarily disputes are settled here in the presence of the monigar, karnam, and some leading men of the village.

History and prospects.—There has been economic deterioration due to the scarcity of rains and the consequent failure of crops. The ryots have been impoverished and consequently obliged to get into the clutches of creditors.

For the present there does not seem to be scope for economic improvement. The tanks are all getting silted up. The bunds are getting decreased in height. Recently one bund burst. The persons concerned are very poor to bear the cost of repairs. But if the repairs are executed then there might be some improvement and the area of irrigated lands might be extended.

More wells could be sunk with advantage. They are not sunk owing to lack of funds with the ryots. People sell land owing to the fact that by doing so only they can support their families and themselves. Land is bought by well-to-do persons as a sort of investment and also because it is sometimes had at a price lower than its right worth.

In recent years there has been no emigration at all. But about ten years ago two persons of Yekili caste emigrated to Natal. They have not since returned. Their emigration was due to their failure to get a living here.

Such movements have generally no visible effect on the life of the village.

Another interesting point is that smelting ovens are seen all round the village in a state of ruin. It seems that formerly (about thirty or forty years ago) iron ore found all round the village was smelted here locally, and that this was sufficient for the local demand. But now no such practice exists. However iron is still found in the shape of filings in large or small quantities round about. Moreover this iron is held to be of good quality. More detailed information can be had from the North Arcot District Manual, wherein it is mentioned.

rooms. The school buildings have been erected at the cost of the villagers. Efforts are being made to provide more accommodation. The school trains pupils for the Kanarese Lower Secondary Examination and instruction is given in Kanarese. Now efforts are being made to open classes in English and also to open a school exclusively for girls. There are about fifty boys in attendance and about fifty girls. School is held from 6-30 to 10-30 in the morning and from 2 to 6 in the evening. No time is allowed for play at all. Instruction is in Kanarese, although the language the people speak is Telugu.

The number of persons who know how to read the vernacular is 131; fifteen or sixteen can read and write English.

There are about thirty or forty books almost all in Sanskrit and Kanarese.

A night school has recently been opened. It has twenty on the rolls, mostly adults. Average attendance five.

Village administration.—There is a panchayat composed of five members. The main work of the panchayat lies in the field of village improvement in the different branches of education, sanitation, etc.

There is a patel and a shanbhog. The shanbhog's duty lies in keeping the village accounts. The patel is concerned with the general oversight of the village and the collection of revenue. There are four servants, two for police purposes and the two others concerned in the collection of revenue.

Sanitary administration.—The panchayat is concerned with the sanitary administration of the village. The panchayat holds meetings when occasion arises and takes steps to improve the sanitation of the village. Every Monday each family supplies half a day's labour, compoundable by a money payment of an anna. This does what is needful for the sanitation of the village. The panchayat exercises a general oversight in these matters. The Sanitary Inspector and the District Health and Sanitary Officer inspect the village often.

There is a police sub-station with a daffadar and five police constables. During nights, three other men watch the village; their services are purely voluntary and unpaid.

The higher authorities are the Amildar, Assistant Commissioner, and the Deputy Commissioner. The Amildar is the only official with whom there is contact at all often. The others visit the village about once or twice in a year. There is a resident shaikdar or revenue inspector.

Crime.—There have been practically no crimes punishable with capital punishment hitherto. Whatever crime there has been consists only of burglaries and minor thefts. These also are rare. For the past six years there has been only one burglary (in 1916); valuables were lost to the value of Rs. 150.

No villagers are engaged in litigation. Almost all civil disputes are decided in the village itself by the panchayat.

History and prospects.—There has been economic deterioration due to the scarcity of rains and the consequent failure of crops. The ryots have been obliged to borrow and this is very well evidenced by the amount of rural indebtedness. No remission is

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
Telugu AWI7

796 from Rs. 100 to Rs. 150, largely spent on drink. The priests of the goddess are low caste people, chiefly the washerman caste. They get new cloths as presents. The whole celebration is barbarous and repulsive.

The village administration.—There is no panchayat in the village. 624 The village officers consist of a karnam, a munsif, and three servants. The karnam keeps the village accounts, while the munsif collects the revenue and attends to small criminal cases. The munsif does not generally care to try civil cases even within his province; they all go to the District Munsif's court.

Nobody attends to the village sanitation, though the munsif is 364 expected to do so. The villagers too do not care to help him in his work. The Sanitary Inspector comes once in a year, and quietly goes away with satisfactory remarks from the easy chair in his note book. He being the one officer for two or three taluks, cannot pay much attention to one taluk in particular; besides he also has engineering work.

635 The police station is seven miles away. When crimes of extraordinary nature take place, the munsif reports the same to the police, who come and conduct enquiries. Most of the crimes are hushed up. Police enquiry is a sham. So is the night patrolling, which is the duty of the village servants.

692 The munsif is expected to hear petty crimes; but many cases 696 that might have been decided here go to the Magistrate's court. Many crimes have been left undetected, and the criminals unpunished, crimes which were horrible and plainly proved. As locally interpreted, the effect of the Evidence Act is such as to render the most proved case null and void for "want of proper evidence." When a murderer once escapes easily from punishment, another is at once encouraged. All the villagers know that it is these considerations that encouraged a man engaged in litigation to murder another who was about to give evidence against him. That case went unpunished. Such is the case with most murders. In fact, most men engaged in important litigation are afraid for their 674 lives in this village. In three years there have been four murders in the neighbourhood of the village, two killed in connection with litigation and two in connection with robbery from the person.

691 There is much litigation. About 45 cases are filed every year. Of these twenty to twenty-five will be for non-clearance of debts, and fifteen to twenty for land disputes. The villagers do not seem to show any hesitation or fear in resorting to the courts. The half educated Brahman in the village, acting as an agent for a vakil, with no other profession, tries to earn his livelihood by creating enmity and disputes among ignorant families and dragging them to the courts. Thus several families which were once considered very rich have been ruined. One family of Komatis, for example, with a property of about Rs. 20,000, was sued by some relations for a partition of the estate. The Vaisya refused all compromise in the earlier courts, pursued the case at enormous expense through the three courts, till he finally lost the whole estate in the High Court. In the end, the family of twelve children, with not an inch of land for support, and no means of liquidating the debts contracted for the court expenses, have sold their big-house and gone away to the Agency tracts as beggars to fill their bellies. There are many families in the village similarly ruined.